

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 474 115

CG 032 270

TITLE A Community Case Study on Underage Drinking Prevention.
INSTITUTION National Association of Governors' Highway Safety
Representatives.
SPONS AGENCY National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (DOT),
Washington, DC.
REPORT NO DOT-HS-809-209
PUB DATE 2001-09-00
NOTE 40p.; For "Community How To Guides," see CG 032 271-279.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescents; Case Studies; *Drinking; *Prevention; *Program
Descriptions; Program Effectiveness

ABSTRACT

The National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives (NAGHSR), with funding from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), pilot tested a comprehensive underage drinking prevention program in a number of communities across the country. In 1995, NAGHSR launched the effort in five communities, which received technical assistance on the comprehensive approach to underage drinking prevention incusing assistance on coalition building, needs based strategic planning, and implementation of an action plan. Additionally, NAGHSR developed a series of "Community How To Guides" that address fundamental components of planning and implementing a comprehensive underage drinking prevention program. To demonstrate the viability of the comprehensive approach detailed in the guides, the organization selected one of the pilot communities that demonstrated a high degree of success. That community is Omaha, Nebraska and Project Extra Mile. This case study presents a step-by-step analysis of what the organization did, how they did it, and the strategies it used to be successful. (GCP)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

A Community Case Study On...

COALITION
BUILDING

NEEDS
ASSESSMENT
& STRATEGIC
PLANNING

EVALUATION

PREVENTION
& EDUCATION

ENFORCEMENT

PUBLIC
POLICY

MEDIA
RELATIONS

SELF
SUFFICIENCY

RESOURCES

Underage Drinking Prevention

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



A Community Case Study On...

COALITION
BUILDING

NEEDS
ASSESSMENT
& STRATEGIC
PLANNING

EVALUATION

PREVENTION
& EDUCATION

ENFORCEMENT

PUBLIC
POLICY

MEDIA
RELATIONS

SELF
SUFFICIENCY

RESOURCES

Underage Drinking Prevention

A Community Case Study On...

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
Acknowledgements	2
Introduction	3
Coalition Building	5
Why Was the Project Established	5
How Was the Project Established	5
Recruitment/Retention Strategy	6
Organizational Structures	6
Executive Director	7
Youth Involvement	8
Needs and Assessment & Strategic Planning	8
Evaluation	10
Prevention and Evaluation	11
Enforcement	11
Public Policy	13
Media Relations	13
Self-Sufficiency	14
Conclusion	15

APPENDICES

Appendix #1 – Coalition Membership	i
Appendix #2 – Targeted Parent Mailing	ii
Appendix #3 – Retailer Encouragement	iv
Appendix #4 – Compliance Check News Release	v
Appendix #5 – Media Coverage	ix
Appendix #6 – Brochure	xvi
Appendix #7 – Pilot Projects	xix

A Community Case Study On...

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cities, counties, and neighborhoods across America are confronting the problem of underage drinking and its consequences. The National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives (NAGHSR) is a professional organization representing the chief highway safety officers from each state, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories. NAGHSR is committed to prevent and reduce illegal underage alcohol consumption and to curb the terrible toll underage drinking takes on our society.

As a result of its commitment to underage drinking issues and to assist cities, counties, and neighborhoods, NAGHSR, with financial assistance from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), developed a series of "*Community How To Guides*." These "*Community How To Guides*" address fundamental components of planning and implementing a comprehensive underage drinking prevention program. The Guides are designed to be brief, easy-to-read, and easy-to-use. Each guide contains a resource section to assist readers in obtaining additional and detailed information about the topics covered in that guide. The appendices include useful tools for each topic area that provide coalitions and organizations a jump-start in their planning and implementation activities.

Topics covered in the "*Community How To Guides*" include:

- Coalition Building
- Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning
- Underage Drinking Enforcement
- Prevention and Education
- Public Policy Advocacy
- Media Relations
- Evaluation
- Self-Sufficiency

In addition to the "*Community How To Guides*," NAGHSR also developed a Case Study of a model community underage drinking prevention program. This study is designed to give other communities, which are considering starting an underage drinking prevention program or those that have an existing effort, some practical, real-world ideas and suggestions. The comprehensive approach, set forth in the "how to guides," has been applied in this community to great success.

The impetus for developing these guides came from the work NAGHSR has done in the area of underage drinking prevention for NHTSA and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Based on its work in the underage drinking prevention arena, NAGHSR felt the comprehensive approach, first piloted in the Washington, D.C. area, could be of benefit to any community seeking to reduce underage drinking.

A Community Case Study On...

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although these guides are targeted at the underage drinking issue, the basic process and information can be applied by any community-based organization striving to affect a social problem through changing community norms. These guides will also prove useful to Safe Communities, Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) chapters, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) organizations, police departments, and youth groups belonging to the National Organizations for Youth Safety (NOYS).

Violence prevention organizations may also find the information and tools helpful since the process to reduce incidents of youth violence is the same process detailed in these guides.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, underage drinking is not inevitable. It is preventable. These "*Community How To Guides*" and the Case Study are designed to help individuals or organizations to craft programs that will help the young people in their communities remain alcohol-free.

A Community Case Study On...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The production of this community case study on underage drinking prevention involved the efforts of a number of people who provided the background and information that is included in this publication.

The National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives (NAGHSR) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) wishes to thank Project Extra Mile

Executive Director Diane Riibe, staff member Beth Westby and Board Chairman Bill Hutto who assisted the NAGHSR review team members. The review team consisted of Pam Beer of PMB Communications, Nancy Chase Garcia of Garcia Consulting and Sgt. Dave Falcinelli of the Montgomery County, Maryland Police Department. Special thanks to the Project Extra Mile board and coalition members who gave their time to meet with the team.



A Community Case Study On... INTRODUCTION

NAGHSR, with funding from NHTSA, pilot tested a comprehensive underage drinking prevention program in a number of communities across the country. In 1995, NAGHSR launched the effort in five communities, which received technical assistance on the comprehensive approach to underage drinking prevention including assistance on coalition building, needs based strategic planning, and implementation of an action plan.

To demonstrate the viability of the comprehensive approach detailed in the NAGHSR/NHTSA *“Community How To Guides,”* the organization

selected one of the pilot communities that demonstrated a high degree of success. That community is Omaha, Nebraska and Project Extra Mile.

The name of the organization—Project Extra Mile—demonstrates the commitment of the people involved. They were willing to go the “extra mile” to prevent underage drinking in their community. Project Extra Mile has been very successful in achieving its mission *“to create a community consensus that clearly states that underage alcohol use is illegal, unhealthy, and unacceptable.”*

Project Extra Mile adopted the comprehensive approach recommended by the NAGHSR/ NHTSA underage drinking prevention effort. During the first year, the organization established a broad-based coalition that was willing to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to determine the nature and extent of the community's underage-drinking problem. This information was used to develop a strategic action plan with measurable objectives that has been implemented in the areas of prevention/education, enforcement, public policy and media relations.

The following is a step-by-step analysis of what the organization did, how they did it, and the strategies it used to be successful.

COALITION BUILDING

■ *Why The Project Was Established*

The Nebraska Office of Highway Safety decided to participate in the initial pilot because Nebraska highway safety data (arrests, injuries and fatalities) indicated there was an alcohol problem among 16 to 20 year olds, particularly in the metropolitan area of Omaha. Since there was no existing underage drinking prevention project in Omaha, the highway safety office looked to the only credible alcohol and drug prevention organization then operating in the area as a place to establish the effort.

■ *How The Project Was Established*

Project Extra Mile was initially housed in PRIDE Omaha, a well respected, existing alcohol and drug prevention organization, which focused on tobacco and underage illicit drug use. Initially this

arrangement worked very well for Project Extra Mile. PRIDE Omaha was a well-known advocacy group with an established network that could generate interest in the underage drinking prevention effort. It also had experienced people and links to other important and influential organizations in the city. After two years with PRIDE, Project Extra Mile made the decision to stand alone and formed a private 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. PRIDE Omaha continued to conduct tobacco and underage illicit drug use programs, and where appropriate, worked with Project Extra Mile.

In some cases, an arrangement such as the partnership Project Extra Mile established with PRIDE Omaha may prove beneficial for the short and long term. However, several drawbacks should be considered including the following:

- Housing an underage drinking prevention effort in an existing organization with a similar or broader mission may complicate the process of generating visibility for the more targeted program.
- The underage drinking effort may not have the autonomy from the larger organization it needs to grow and expand.
- The underage drinking effort may take on the larger organization's reputation, both good and bad.

While the "period" with another organization provides a number of immediate benefits, Project Extra Mile recommended a discussion take place early on about the potential for the effort to later become independent if a community decides to house its underage drinking prevention initiative in a currently established organization.

A Community Case Study On...

■ **Recruitment/Retention Strategy**

A key element of a comprehensive program is the formation of a broad-based coalition. In this respect, Project Extra Mile did an outstanding job.

"The value of Project Extra Mile is 50 credible organizations."

*Former legal counsel,
Legislature's General Affairs Committee*

Within three months from the date the program started, a notice was sent to all organizations in the Omaha area that had a connection to the underage drinking problem. People from the targeted organizations were called and urged to join the coalition because the project needed their input, money, time and expertise. This recruitment strategy proved beneficial as evidenced by the large number of organizations that attended the first organizing meeting. In this instance, Project Extra Mile recognized people's talents and moved quickly to make use of them. Some coalition members became involved because of a personal interest in the issue and others because they felt their organization should be involved.

One of the difficulties Project Extra Mile, like most organizations, faced was keeping people interested and involved. In the words of one early member, "I gave them a year." People who attended the early organizational meetings also made it clear they did not want to participate in an organization that was meeting for the sake of meeting. "I didn't need another meeting," was a common response.

Project Extra Mile developed several strategies that allayed these concerns and kept people involved and interested. The Coalition did the following:

- Presented itself from the beginning as an organization that was going to get things done. It developed a strategy to identify the specific problems in the community and ways to solve them.
- Tapped into people's desire to help and engaged them by exuding a sense of confidence and expectation. People who participated felt valued.
- Introduced itself as a focused group with an emphasis on action.
- Recognized the needs and limitations of the agencies that became involved, particularly enforcement and education agencies.
- Demonstrated early in the process that it could achieve tangible results.
- Recognized and celebrated achievements early and often by playing taped segments of news coverage at meetings, for instance.
- Drew interesting speakers to coalition meetings, such as a state senator.

The evidence of the success of this approach was the large number of people who stayed involved with the organization. These members demonstrated a commitment and enthusiasm for the organization's mission and new people joined because the organization achieved results.

■ **Organizational Structure**

The organizational structure also contributed to coalition members staying involved. A 15-member board of directors with fiduciary and policy responsibilities governed Project Extra Mile and provided an essential element of accountability. This board included a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

A Community Case Study On...

One of the early policy issues addressed by the Project Extra Mile board was whether the organization should accept money from the alcohol industry. Members of the board brought in alcohol retailers and weighed the merits intensively. After much discussion and review, the board adopted a policy position that Project Extra Mile would not accept money or in-kind donations from individuals or organizations whose primary business is the making or selling of alcohol. This enabled the coalition to avoid any conflict of interest. The policy did not preclude the organization, however, from accepting money or in-kind donations from individuals and organizations whose business includes the sale of some alcoholic products such as restaurants or food stores.

A 59-member coalition oversaw all planning and implementation functions and divided into five working groups that tracked the organization's strategic goals in the areas of Public Information and Education, Access and Availability, Enforcement, Public Policy and Youth in Action. Appendix #1 is a list of the members of the coalition.

According to an official with the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission, "There are a lot of failures in the non-profit world. Project Extra Mile is not one of them." It provided the structure and vehicle for change and made it easy for people to be motivated to make that change.

One of the challenges Project Extra Mile faced was to insure the organization reflected the community it served, and was diverse in terms of ethnicity and gender. In some cases, the people who make things happen in a community may not reflect this diversity. As Project Extra Mile grew and expanded, it was evident more effort

was needed to reach out to other groups. The project had limited success in achieving greater diversity. The issue of underage drinking is not typically on the priority list of more diverse elements of the community and Project Extra Mile needed to identify leaders to recruit these diverse members to the organization.

■ *Executive Director*

Some of the factors critical to the success of Project Extra Mile were the skill, qualifications and experience of the Executive Director. This individual demonstrated an ability to involve and motivate people to accomplish the goals of the organization. There are several key qualities that other coalitions and organizations should look for in selecting an executive director or coordinator. These qualities include the following:

- Experience with substance abuse prevention (This knowledge gave Project Extra Mile a jump start and enabled them to hit the ground running.)
- Vision
- Passion
- Political savvy and judgment
- Organizational skills
- Communication and media skills
- Public policy advocacy experience
- Ability to avoid and/or manage conflict as the situation dictates
- A reputation of credibility and reliability in the community

A Community Case Study On...

More than one participant described the executive director as “the velvet hammer,” a useful description when trying to change behavior and attitude.

■ **Youth Involvement**

Involving youth in Project Extra Mile was a key objective of the organization and the involvement of the target group proved to be beneficial in achieving several goals including generating media interest and making public policy change.

Following are several of the reasons youth initially became involved in the organization and continued to be interested and active:

- The project conducted activities and programs that appealed to youth.
- Youth felt the organization was action-oriented and got things done.
- Youth, as members of the Board of Directors, felt they had a say and that their opinions were heard and appreciated.
- The organization recognized the special schedules of the young people and, when giving them opportunities to be involved, let them know well in advance.
- Youth actively assisted in the development of messages and participated in media advocacy efforts.
- There were opportunities or “perks” for involvement, such as trips, training and testifying before the state legislature. In addition to testifying, the organization also had each young person write their own testimony, which gave them further ownership in the activity.
- The project helped youth understand the need to change the environment and

provided them with strategies to accomplish that goal.

“I finally met people who were on the same page on alcohol. It’s so hard to be good.”

“They get stuff done and we have fun.”

“We’re free to express our opinions.”

Youth board and coalition members

As part of their involvement, the youth met with the Nebraska Governor and successfully argued for the formation of a task force that would look at underage drinking issues. In addition, the youth members of Project Extra Mile all made a commitment to be alcohol- and drug-free, to wear seat belts at all times and to be leaders.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC PLANNING

The needs assessment conducted by Project Extra Mile was an impressive effort that included collecting data in a number of areas, a survey with 850 respondents and 14 focus groups with a representative sampling of youth, retailers, law enforcement, prosecutors, and parents. The power of the overall effort was the organization’s ability to collect and use the qualitative and quantitative data appropriately.

The needs assessment was central to the success of Project Extra Mile for a number of reasons including the following:

- It helped the organization create and maintain a focus.

Maintaining focus on the underage drinking problem appears to be a key to success. There were a number of attempts made to broaden the organization’s focus to include other issues such as drug abuse. The mission set forth in

A Community Case Study On...

the needs assessment document—"to create a community consensus that clearly states underage alcohol use is illegal, unhealthy and unacceptable"—served as a reminder of the organization's purpose. It also clearly outlined the nature and extent of the underage-drinking problem in the Omaha area.

"The coalition stayed with what the needs assessment told us. Again, and again, we went back to the data."

Health department official

- The strategic plan related directly to the problems and consequently had a greater chance of being effective and successful. Needs-based planning focused efforts and resources where they were needed most.
- The focus groups, conducted by trained facilitators, gave the organization's findings credibility.

Individuals who participated in the focus groups articulated their ideas and thoughts, which, at times, resulted in penetrating commentary such as the remark from a local prosecutor who coined the phrase "drive by parenting." "Drive by parenting" was used to reflect the lack of time and attention some parents gave to their children. In the case of enforcement, participating in the focus groups helped them understand the seriousness of the underage drinking issue and why it is important. The focus groups also helped Project Extra Mile understand the needs and concerns of key target groups such as prosecutors and law enforcement and enabled the organization to work more effectively with these groups.

"The needs assessment and focus groups gave us real data...and statements we could use [in our education efforts]."

Former coalition chair

- The findings in the needs assessment were used to generate public awareness regarding the nature and extent of the underage drinking problem and helped change attitudes. As the former legal counsel to the Legislature's General Affairs Committee said, "Project Extra Mile developed a data base that was hard to argue against." In terms of media and public policy, the organization got a lot of mileage out of the local data that was generated from the needs assessment.
- The coalition had ownership in the plan that was developed. Once the needs assessment was completed, a small, ad hoc group of four or five members of the coalition worked out the structure for the strategic plan, based on the findings, and took it back to the larger coalition for review and input. This was an efficient way to involve all stakeholders and maintain interest and involvement.

Sometimes coalitions like Project Extra Mile need to take a step back after they have been in operation for several years to review what occurred and determine whether changes need to be made. A coalition retreat where everyone involved can participate and offer their views and suggestions can help an organization meet changing circumstances. Strategic plans are not set in stone, but rather they are "living" documents that need to be reexamined on a periodic basis to insure the organization is moving in the right direction. Project Extra Mile is contemplating a review of its strategic plan in the near future.

A Community Case Study On...

EVALUATION

Project Extra Mile's strategic plan included the following goals:

- Informing the general public on youth alcohol laws, penalties and consequences
- Reducing youth access/availability of alcohol
- Increasing enforcement
- Improving laws and reducing loopholes in laws

Project Extra Mile recognized the need to document its activities and programs in each of these goal areas in order to continue demonstrating the success that had been so important to the organization's on-going viability.

In the area of public information and education, Project Extra Mile produced and disseminated newsletters, a brochure, targeted mailings to parents of area high school students, and retailer encouragement cards, which salute retailers who do not sell alcohol to minors. They also conducted news events, sent letters to the editor, and produced news releases and public service announcements.

Appendix #2 contains a sample from the targeted parent mailing. Appendix #3 contains a sample of the retailer encouragement card.

In the area of access and availability, the organization monitored hearings of the Liquor Control Commission to determine what happens to retailers cited for sales to minor violations, and sent letters to retailers on the "Hands Off Halloween" campaign (See Community How to Guide on Media Relations for description of Halloween campaign).

In enforcement, the organization achieved agreement among all eight metro Omaha law enforcement agencies to collaborate on a minimum of four multi-jurisdictional efforts each year. These efforts included coordinated compliance checks of alcohol retail establishments in a two-county area, traffic safety checkpoints and other selective enforcement efforts, and the collection and compilation of data regarding compliance checks and "minor in possession" violations to be used in media efforts.

The compliance check effort was one of the most successful initiatives the organization conducted. In three years, the number of retailers selling alcohol to minors dropped from 41% to 19%. In addition, the focus on enforcement also resulted in a 20% increase in "minor in possession" charges in one year.

In the area of public policy, Project Extra Mile successfully supported and advocated for a law restricting the ability of retailers with multiple violations from selling alcohol to minors to "buy out" of suspensions through the payment of a cash penalty. The organization also successfully worked with the state's Liquor Control Commission to double the length of suspension for liquor license holders with multiple violations of selling alcohol to minors. In public policy initiatives, the organization gave special care to insure compliance with all federal and state regulations on lobbying.

A Community Case Study On...

PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

As noted earlier, one of the goals of Project Extra Mile was to “inform the general public on youth alcohol laws, penalties and consequences.” In this area, the organization employed several methods, which helped it to be successful. The methods used by Project Extra Mile include the following:

- Found products that were created by somebody else that met local needs and used them. The organization also allowed others to use its materials.
- Identified ways to get around barriers in terms of reaching key audiences, such as parents. For example, when mailing label information was not available from one source, the organization got it from another.
- Developed a variety of approaches to reach people, including the use of powerful images that touched people emotionally or used humor when appropriate. For instance, the organization used a particularly moving photo of a dog that would not leave his owner, even though the young man had died in a car crash. Appendix #6 contains a copy of the brochure in which the photo was used.
- Determined the most effective messages for each target audience and then developed communications campaigns to reach that audience including parents, youth and retailers. A good example is the sample card in Appendix #2 which shows a typical teenager's room that was sent to parents of high school students.
- Timed the delivery of its public information messages when people were more likely to be paying attention, such as during holiday periods and prom/graduation season.
- Developed, in the public's mind, a common thread that linked various types of tragedies involving alcohol, such as drowning, assaults,

and other crimes, to the problem of underage drinking.

“They were able to raise [awareness about] alcohol problems to a level where people could understand them.”

*Former legal counsel,
Legislature's General Affairs Committee*

ENFORCEMENT

The ability of the organization to work with law enforcement was one of its greatest strengths and it forged a successful relationship between enforcement and prevention. Project Extra Mile's success in the area of enforcement was due to the following:

- Sought law enforcement involvement, listened to its perspective and valued its contribution.
- Rose above inter-agency disagreements or geo-political considerations. This allowed the enforcement work group to meet together and brainstorm ways to effectively target the problem of underage drinking.
- Facilitated a discussion of the enforcement plan that made it easy for enforcement agencies to participate.
- Understood the limitations of enforcement agencies and recognized the pressure they face from the public and others.
- Law enforcement perceived the organization to be action-oriented. Project Extra Mile presented itself as a group that knew where it was going, how it wanted to get there and how law enforcement could help it meet its goals and objectives.

“[Project Extra Mile's approach] was much more 'what can we do for you.' It made our job easier.”

Sheriff's department official

A Community Case Study On...

In deciding what activities to conduct in the area of enforcement, Project Extra Mile first reviewed the needs assessment and then considered available resources. Enforcement agencies also did some brainstorming to determine appropriate strategies. As noted in a previous section, one of the strengths of this project was its ability to understand and work with the needs, concerns and limitations of its members, including enforcement. When Project Extra Mile prioritized its activities, it selected compliance checks because law enforcement could implement this activity relatively easily.

The compliance checks activity was a cooperative venture. Project Extra Mile acted as a facilitator by training youth, organizing and conducting media outreach, conducting follow-up with retailers and bringing all relevant agencies together in a neutral setting. The effectiveness of the effort was underscored by a comment from a liquor control official, who said, "When the [alcohol] industry screams, I know [Project Extra Mile is] onto something."

"[Project Extra Mile] filled a role in interagency cooperation that had never been filled before. We haven't seen this kind of cooperation in 15 years."

Coalition chair

Project Extra Mile did its homework and understood the situation facing law enforcement before they went in with a request.

Media attention has been especially concentrated on the compliance check effort, which helped

Project Extra Mile increase its visibility in the community, but may have also created an impression that the problem is primarily the fault of the retail industry. A more balanced approach that focuses on both supply (the retail industry) and demand (the underage purchaser) may ultimately result in greater change over the long term. Project Extra Mile recognized this fact and will be reviewing ways to publicize saturation patrols and targeted sobriety checkpoints in the future. The organization will also be working to heighten awareness about efforts targeted at underage youth who obtain alcohol illegally from a variety of sources including retailers, adults, or in private homes.

In addition to the enforcement efforts, Project Extra Mile also focused on adjudication. Members of the organization sat down with prosecutors and judges to educate them about the problem of underage drinking and urge them to assess at least minimum penalties on violators. They also changed the way cases involving retailers, charged with selling alcohol to minors, were handled by the state Liquor Control Commission. At every hearing, a representative of the coalition was present throughout the proceedings and as a consequence, penalties assessed against violators were increased.

"Project Extra Mile makes its presence known—it really makes a difference. The style is personable and they get their point across without anger. They are professional and they use data effectively."

Liquor Control Commission Official

PUBLIC POLICY

As in the case of enforcement, Project Extra Mile identified specific changes it wanted to make, prioritized them and developed a comprehensive plan for change. The advocacy efforts were also made easier by the fact the organization was a non-profit entity and, as such, the staff carefully maintained records to insure compliance with all federal and state laws and lobbying regulations.

Project Extra Mile faced the same restrictions and limitations as any non-profit organization that receives government funding. It recognized, however, that public policy advocacy was crucial to their overall program, and sought outside funding to support the effort. It was also careful to insure compliance with all IRS regulations governing the amount of money that could be spent each year on advocacy efforts.

The issue targeted by the organization in its public policy efforts was to change a provision in law that allowed retailers with multiple violations to “buy out” of a suspension for sales to minor violations. It took several years, but the effort was ultimately successful.

“No longer are the people making money off alcohol left unchallenged.”

*Former legal counsel,
General Affairs Committee*

The following were some of the reasons the public policy effort was successful:

- Used data and information from the needs assessment to document the nature and extent of the problem.
- Reduced the effectiveness of opposition arguments by highlighting media coverage that showed young people, who clearly looked underage, having no problem purchasing alcohol illegally.
- Successfully used members of the community to testify or to educate elected officials on underage drinking problems. Law enforcement officers, for instance, testified in uniform, giving further credibility to the Project Extra Mile arguments.
- Used nontraditional voices, such as a representative of the Chamber of Commerce and the League of Municipalities to further underscore the widespread nature of the underage drinking problem. (This helped to galvanize people who had not traditionally been interested in the problem of underage drinking.)
- Effectively used youth to testify or to educate elected officials, which provided a reality check on how easy it was to purchase alcohol illegally.
- Educated the public on the importance of legislative initiatives, such as repeal of the “buy out” provision.
- Remained patient and didn’t give up.

MEDIA RELATIONS

In order to accomplish the goal of increasing public awareness, Project Extra Mile demonstrated an ability to attract media attention. The organization accomplished this goal by doing the following:

- Made their issue interesting and visual.
- Provided valuable and useful information for the public.
- Employed a variety of delivery mechanisms including newspapers, radio, television, public service announcements, videos, and postcard mailings.
- Developed good relationships with reporters and media gatekeepers.

A Community Case Study On...

- Did the work for the media, which depends on credible sources.

Every activity of the project was also examined for its media potential. For instance, the media was contacted about a recent filming of a youth video that resulted in news coverage. *Appendix #4 contains a sample news release on one of the organization's compliance check efforts.*

A compilation of newspaper coverage showed a broad range of interest by the media including reports on the findings of the needs assessment, profiles of individuals involved in the effort, results of compliance checks and other enforcement efforts, and public policy initiatives. *Appendix #5 includes a sample of some of the organization's media coverage.*

As in the case of public policy, youth were effectively utilized as messengers giving further credibility to the organization's message. Future plans for youth include a community-advertising audit, which may be used for testimony before the state legislature and in media relations efforts.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Project Extra Mile, like many other organizations involved in underage drinking prevention, was funded by government grants. The organization had not solicited or obtained a great deal of funding from the private sector. This situation is common among non-profit organizations, particularly those that start with government funding. A more balanced mix of government and private support may be beneficial for long-term growth and survival.

"The challenge is to stay alive and maintain funding. We know big changes have taken place in the last five years. Project Extra Mile is the only organization working on this issue."

Health Department official

As the organization grows and matures, the community will need to determine whether it will continue by stepping forward with not only resources, but financial support as well. This will require the development of a self-sufficiency plan and an identified individual who can follow through on all requests. Project Extra Mile hired a staff person with fundraising experience to work on a self-sufficiency campaign.

It is recommended, however, that organizations start a self-sufficiency plan at the outset. While this may be difficult in the beginning with limited staff and a work plan already in place, it is preferable to the possibility that the organization will have to cease operations later on due to limitations on funding from government sources.

CONCLUSION

Project Extra Mile has distinguished itself as a model program. Despite early challenges involving the continuation of the program as a private, non-profit entity, the organization has continued to grow and expand.

What Project Extra Mile has accomplished was not easy, but it is possible. The purpose of this case study is to give other communities insight into a successful approach to the problem of underage drinking. The organization is now recognized, not only in Omaha, but also in other areas of the country, as an example of what can happen when dedicated and committed individuals apply a comprehensive approach to underage drinking prevention. The same can happen in any community. It takes...

- Identifying good leaders,
- Assembling a broad-based coalition,
- Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment,

- Developing a strategic action plan based on the findings from the needs assessment,
- Insuring goals and objectives in the plan are measurable so the effectiveness of the organization's efforts can be evaluated, and
- Providing a continuing, balanced mix of funding from both public and private sources.

It can be done and Project Extra Mile provides an excellent road map for other organizations to follow.

NOTE: Since the publication of the "*Community How to Guides*," Project Extra Mile has moved. The new address and phone number are:

Project Extra Mile
11606 Nicholas Street
Omaha, NE 68154
402-963-9047
Fax: 402-963-0015
E-mail: driibe@alltel.net

PROJECT EXTRA MILE
COALITION MEMBERSHIP

Adams County Underage Drinking Project
Anderson Amoco
Bellevue Police Department
Bellevue Public Schools
Bellevue West High School
Bennington Police Department
Bryan High School
Camp Fire Boys and Girls
Chicano Awareness Center
Child Saving Institute
College of Saint Mary
Council Bluffs Police Department
Council Bluffs Public Schools
Creighton Prep School
District 66 Schools
Douglas County Health Department
Douglas County Sheriff's Department
Drug Free Schools – ESU #3
Duchesne Academy
Elkhorn High School
Elkhorn Police Department
Emergency Nurses Care
Employee Assistance Essentials
Family Service
Farmers Insurance Group
Greater Omaha Community Association
Hastings Council on Alcoholism
HALO – Helping All Little Ones
Helping All Teens Succeed
Liquor Control Commission

Lutz and Company
Madonna School for Exceptional Children
Metro Community College
Mission Middle School
Mothers Against Drunk Driving
National Kidney Foundation
Nebraska Office of Highway Safety
Nebraska State Patrol
Nebraska State Probation
Nishnabotna Girl Scouts
Oasis Enterprises
Office of Community Partnership
Omaha City Prosecutor
Omaha Police Department
Pacific Hills Lutheran Church
Papillion Police Department
Papillion/La Vista Schools
Pianos Plus
Ralston Police Department
Region VI
Safety and Health Council
Sarpy County Attorney's Office
Sarpy County Sheriff's Department
St. Michael Lutheran Church
STAND – Student Group
Too Young To Die
United Way of the Midlands
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Urban League of Nebraska

	<p>It's easier for a teenager to get his hands on alcohol than to find a CD in his room.</p>	
		

PROJECT EXTRAMILE

305 North 2nd Suite
Omaha, NE 68102
(402) 305-1402
info@extramile.org

HERE'S WHAT WE FOUND

- Almost 1 out of 3 licensees sold to minors.
- Of those who sold, 56% checked ID and sold anyway.

Sometimes the problem is closer to home. Although it's against the law, some parents and older siblings provide alcohol to minors or allow minors to drink in their home.

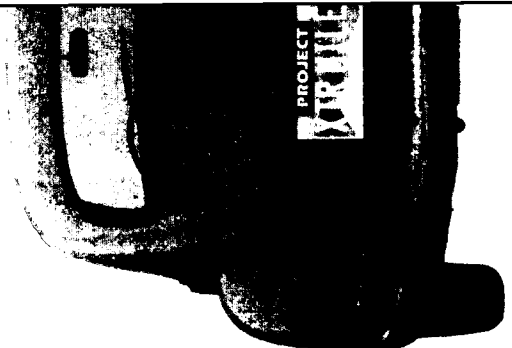
WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Be sure you send a clear message to your teen that underage alcohol use is unacceptable.
- Know where your kids are and if alcohol is being served at a party.
- Communicate with the parents of your teen's friends.
- Make adults more accountable by changing policies and attitudes.

Call Project Extra Mile at 231-4305.

For the last two years, Project Extra Mile has been coordinating compliance checks with eight area law enforcement agencies. Officers accompany teens as they try to purchase alcohol at convenience stores, grocery stores, restaurants and bars. The kids, all under 21, use their real IDs and never lie about their age.

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE
PAID
OMAHA, NE
PERMIT 578



Project Extra Mile is an underage drinking prevention project funded by the Nebraska Office of Highway Safety and private donations.

Underage Drinking Prevention

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A Community Case Study On...

APPENDIX 3



A Message of Encouragement from

Project Extra Mile
Underage Drinking Prevention Project

Our mission
is to create
a community consensus
that clearly states
that underage alcohol use
is illegal,
unhealthy
and
unacceptable.

VOICE: 402 . 231 . 4305
FAX: 402 . 231 . 4307
302 S. 36TH STREET SUITE 214
OMAHA, NE 68131

A Community Case Study On...

APPENDIX 4

NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release
May 12, 2000

For more information, contact Diane Riibe, 231-4305 or 699-4340
Extensive Compliance Checks Finds 19% of Businesses Sold Alcohol to Minors

Minors were able to purchase alcohol in 19% (60) of the 317 metro area licensed outlets checked by enforcement officers on Thursday evening, May 11, 2000. Of the non-compliant businesses, 55% (33 business out of 60) did not check for ID at all. Twenty-seven checked the ID of the minor and sold alcohol anyway. Eighteen percent of businesses sold to minors in a similar effort in February.

Of the outlets checked, 20 were being rechecked after selling alcohol to a minor during a recent enforcement effort. Of those businesses, only one was found to be non-compliant again. Additionally, 14 outlets were checked because of complaints lodged against them. Of those, four sold alcohol to the minor.

The multi-jurisdictional effort was the single largest enforcement to date, checking approximately 25% of all area licensees in one night. With the assistance of nine law enforcement agencies, more than 40 officers, and 18 youth under the age of 21, Thursday's operation more than doubled the largest effort ever before conducted in Nebraska. The enforcement effort was coordinated by Project Extra Mile.

In one west Omaha lounge, an 18-year-old girl was refused a sale. She was told that "normally we would sell to you, but we don't sell to minors until after 10:30 p.m. "

Officers found a number of hotels and motels selling to minors. At one hotel, a 16-year-old girl went to the buffet and asked an employee if the buffet was free. He informed her it was free to guests. She then got a glass of beer and approached the manager, beer in hand, and asked where she might get ice. She was escorted to the ice, but the beer was never questioned.

More than ever, it was clear that many establishments were expecting the compliance check. At one restaurant, management decided not to sell alcohol to anyone on Thursday evening to avoid selling to a minor. At several convenience stores, clerks were waiting for the minors and even followed them to the coolers. One store had posted a sign to remind its employees to card because "a sting was going to take place on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday."

"With so many people involved in this massive effort, it's difficult to keep it secret," says Diane Riibe, Executive Director of Project Extra Mile. "On the one hand, heightened awareness is good. But at the same time, we'd like to get a real life reflection on the accessibility of alcohol to kids through commercial outlets."

Also noteworthy is the commitment of law enforcement agencies involved. "The officers seem more firmly dedicated every time we do these checks," comments Diane. Agencies involved in this effort included Bellevue Police Department, Douglas County Sheriff's Department, La Vista Police Department, Nebraska State Patrol, Omaha Police Department, Papillion Police Department, Ralston Police Department, Sarpy County Sheriff's Department, and Valley Police Department.

The mission of Project Extra Mile is to create a community consensus that clearly states that underage alcohol use is illegal, unhealthy and unacceptable.



SUMMARY

Alcohol Compliance Checks
for sales to minors

Conducted: May 11, 2000

Location: Douglas and Sarpy Counties in Nebraska

Participating Agencies:

- Bellevue Police Department
- Douglas County Sheriff's Department
- LaVista Police Department
- Omaha Police Department
- Papillion Police Department
- Ralston Police Department
- Sarpy County Sheriff's Department
- Valley Police Department

Results:

# of Checks	Not in Compliance (n/c)	n/c: Did not Check ID	n/c: Checked ID
317	60(19%)	33(55%)	27(45%)

Compliance checks coordinated by Project Extra Mile.
For additional information, call 231-4305

Alcohol Compliance Checks

May 11, 2000 Douglas and Sarpy Counties

317 Businesses Checked, 60 sold (19%)

The following license holders sold alcohol to minors:				
Retailer	Address	City	County	ID Checked
AJ's Sports Bar	5305 S 96th St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Albertson's	820 N Saddle Creek	Omaha	Douglas	no
Baker's Supermarket	5018 Ames Ave.	Omaha	Douglas	no
Bittersweet Lounge	1512 Howard	Omaha	Douglas	no
Buchanan's Midtown Amoco	101 N. 30th St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Buck's	4420 L St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Cenex Convenient Store	2104 Pratt Ave.	Bellevue	Sarpy	no
Embassy Suites Old Market	555 S 10th St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Fantasy's Food & Fuel	12701 S 28th Ave.	Bellevue	Sarpy	no
Femados	380 N 114th St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Flashback's	3013 S 83rd Plz	Omaha	Douglas	no
Florence Food Mart	9516 Calhoun Rd	Omaha	Douglas	no
Garden Café at Landmark	1212 Hamey St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Gold Coast Lounge	4706 S 108th St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Goodies	4145 Ames Ave.	Omaha	Douglas	no
Hawthorne Suites Hotel	11025 M St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Horseman's Park	62nd & Q	Omaha	Douglas	no
Kum & Go #357	1222 S. 24th St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Kum & Go #365	4108 W Dodge Rd	Omaha	Douglas	no
Kwik Shop #691	4880 S 96th St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Lakeview Golf Course	7400 Q St	Raiston	Douglas	no
Ming & Ming	828 Tara Plz	Papillion	Sarpy	no
Osco Drug #2240	4411 Center St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Panda House Chinese Rest.	14461 W Center Rd	Omaha	Douglas	no
Pastimes Bistro	7653 Cass St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Phil's Foodway	4232 Redman Ave.	Omaha	Douglas	no
Sheraton Inn	4888 S 118th St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Sidelines Sports Bar	4821 O St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Stop & Go	4839 S 24th St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Three Dollar Café	5032 S 108th St	Omaha	Douglas	no
Trovato's	513 Underwood Ave.	Omaha	Douglas	no
Value Mart	1008 W. Mission St	Bellevue	Sarpy	no
Wyndham Hotel	11515 Miracle Hills	Omaha	Douglas	no
Anthony's Rest. & Lounge	7220 F St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Barry O's	420 S 10th St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Brass Grille	1207 Harney St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Brass Knocker Lounge	3012 N 102nd St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Broadmore Market	8722 Pacific	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Cenex Convenience Store 031	5120 S 118th St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Convenient Food Mart	Hyw 370 & 36th	Omaha	Sarpy	yes
Don & Millie's	8405 Q St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Eddy's	10780 Q St	Omaha	Douglas	yes

Alcohol Compliance Checks

May 11, 2000 Douglas and Sarpy Counties

317 Businesses Checked, 60 sold (19%)

Retailer	Address	City	County	ID Checked
Flying J Travel Plaza	15010 S Hwy 31	Gretna	Sarpy	yes
Ginn	4102 L St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Grandpa's C Mart	5018 Underwood Ave.	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Hooter's	12405 W Center Rd	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Kum & Go #356	5188 Leavenworth Ave.	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Kwik Shop #622	9545 Q St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Kwik Shop #665	15556 Blondo St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Kwik Shop #690	3428 S 42nd St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Liquor Cabinet	1007 S. Galvin Rd	Bellevue	Sarpy	yes
Mr. C's Steakhouse	5319 N 30th	Omaha	Douglas	yes
No Frills Supermarket	1510 Harlan Dr	Bellevue	Sarpy	yes
Outback Steakhouse	2414 S 132nd St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Pasta Amore Fantasia	11027 Prairie Br Rd	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Regis Food Mart	2810 S 108th St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Romeo's	14630 W Center Rd	Omaha	Douglas	yes
South Omaha Hillside	3906 L St	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Spirit N Things	2762 S 129th Ave.	Omaha	Douglas	yes
Sushi Factory	631 N 114th St	Omaha	Douglas	yes

Alcohol sales to minors stings 16 businesses

By EUGENE CURTIN
Leader senior writer

Six Bellevue businesses were among 60 that fell afoul of a recent metrowide sting designed to root out alcohol sales to minors.

The "compliance check," conducted by area police agencies under the sponsorship of Project Extra Mile, found that 60 of 317 licensed outlets sold to minors the evening of May 11. That figure represents a 19 percent non-compliance rate.

Among them were the Cenex Convenient Store at 21st Street and Cornhusker Road; Fantasy's Food and Fuel at 12701 S. 28th Ave.; Value Mart at 1008 Mission Ave.; Convenient Food Mart at Nebraska Highway 370 and 36th St.; Liquor Cabinet at 1007 Galvin Road; and No Frills Supermarket at 1510 Harlan Drive.

Diane Riibe, executive director of Project Extra Mile, said the 19 percent failure rate was about average. During a check last October, she said, 23 percent of businesses were in violation, while a February check turned up 18 percent.

She said there were clear signs that word of the May 11 operation had leaked.

She said one restaurant simply suspended alcohol sales for the evening, while clerks at several convenience stores were on high alert, even following minors to the coolers.

She said one store had a sign posted warning employees to be especially careful about checking IDs because a sting was expected that week.

"With so many people involved in this massive effort, it's difficult to keep it a secret," Riibe said. "On the one hand, heightened awareness is good. But at the same

time, we'd like to get a real life reflection of the accessibility of alcohol to kids through commercial outlets."

Of the six Bellevue businesses that sold to a minor, three first checked their IDs.

Riibe said there are two primary reasons why a clerk might sell to a minor even after checking an ID. First, she said, the clerk might not really be checking the ID but just going through the motions for the benefit of the video camera recording his work.

Second, the clerk might be unable to calculate from the ID card's birth date whether the customer is 21 years old or not.

She said one clerk failed to identify a minor's age because the last digit of the year on the ID card was obstructed by blue ink.

She said the blue ink was part of a vertical word identifying the owner as a minor.

"Sometimes you can't see the forest for the trees," she said.

Riibe said clerks who violate the law face serious consequences. Many lose their jobs, she said. All receive criminal citations and are on the hook for a \$150 fine.

The offending businesses also face either suspension of their license or a per diem fine for each day of suspension they wish to avoid. Those fines can add up to thousands of dollars, she said.

Project Extra Mile is a non-profit organization that battles underage alcohol use. It is funded by the state of Nebraska and by private donations.

Police agencies involved in the compliance checks included the Bellevue, La Vista and Papillion police departments, as well as the Sarpy County Sheriff's Department.

COLUMBUS TELEGRAM

Thursday
April
6
2 0 0 0
Low Tonight: 42 High Tomorrow: 48
Complete Weather, Page 8A

Alcohol expert glad of city effort

By MEGAN RABBASS
Telegram Staff Writer

COLUMBUS — When Diane Riibe was telling her sister about the numerous accidents involving teens and alcohol that had occurred within the past five years in Columbus, her sister thought she was talking about Columbus, Ohio.

She wasn't.

Riibe, executive director of Project Extra Mile, an underage drinking prevention project in Omaha, said she's happy Columbus is finally doing something to address teen drinking.

"Over the years, those who work with prevention in the state were desperately hoping Columbus and the community members in Columbus would say it's time (to address teen drinking)," she said.

That time is here, Riibe told about 15 people gathered for the Platte-Colfax Safe Communities Organization meeting Wednesday. She was invited to speak to the group about what Project Extra Mile has done since it was formed five years ago.

•See ALCOHOL, Page 8A



Riibe

ALCOHOL

Continued from Page 1A

Omaha was chosen by the National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives as one of five demonstration sites to replicate an underage drinking prevention project from Washington, D.C.

The group did a needs assessment study to describe the community, conducting 850 surveys. Then, the group formed 14 focus groups to find out what each group saw as a problem. Participants were youth, law enforcement officers, parents, prosecutors and retail owners who sell alcohol.

At the same time, the group was forming a coalition.

Riibe said throughout the surveys, one message was heard. She referred to it as drive-by parenting."

She described drive-by parents as those who work all day, then rush home to make supper and see if their kids are all right.

"Then they rush off to their bar or board room. Something keeps them occupied so they don't have to go about the business of parenting," she said.

Since it began, Project Extra Mile has worked with teens, parents, law enforcement officers, judges and lawmakers to address underage drinking.

"We want you to change policies that regulate the community and have law enforcement enforce them and educate the community about them," Riibe said.

She said the group's success is evident in the 20 percent increase in minor in possession arrests in the past year.

The group also has worked to coordinate compliance checks at local businesses to see if they sell alcohol to minors.

"Enforcement equals prevention," she told the group.

Riibe asked the group what effect accidents have on community attitudes toward teen drinking.

Columbus Police Sgt. Tim Kayl said there is little effect. He said he was in court this week when a teen's minor in possession case was being heard. The teen-ager and his lawyer asked that sentencing be delayed so the teen would be able to drive to prom.

Safe Communities member Rebecca Rayman said statistics show a need for a group like Project Extra Mile locally. She said 90 percent of all fatal crashes in Colfax County in the past year were alcohol related, while 50 percent of fatal accidents in Platte County involved alcohol.

Riibe said Columbus is one of five communities in the state replicating Project

Extra Mile's work. She said federal grants are available to fund the local project.

Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles Traffic Safety Specialist John Ways Sr. said his office can help local officials fill out funding applications.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



Omaha World-Herald

Midlands

DEATHS, 16; BUSINESS, 18
MORE MIDLANDS NEWS, 22

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD Thursday, December 23, 1999

PAGE 15

\$500 Fine Too Lenient for Drinking Party, Say Critics

The Omaha homeowner accused of allowing the underage activity pleaded no contest

BY ANGIE BRUNKOW
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

An Omaha man accused of permitting a large underage drinking party at his home in August has been fined \$500.

The sentence sparked immediate

criticism from community members who said Judge Samuel V. Cooper had been too lenient with Jerry Schneider, the parent of a former Westside High School student.

Four teens who attended the party at Schneider's house were charged in connection with a fire set at the home of a Westside High School administrator.

Schneider, a 52-year-old executive, could have faced a maximum sentence of a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

"We are just enormously disappointed," said Diane Riibe,

executive director for Project Extra Mile.

Schneider pleaded no contest Tuesday in Douglas County Court to one count of contributing to the delinquency of a minor. The case had been scheduled to go to trial Jan. 3.

Cooper accepted the plea, found him guilty and sentenced him to pay \$500.

Riibe, whose organization works to stop underage drinking, said Cooper missed an opportunity to send a message.

"Judge Cooper had an opportunity to be a part of the solution," Riibe said.

"Instead he amplified the fact that often the weak link in the fight against drinking is in the courts.

"He gave a judicial nod and a wink to a parent who endangered the lives of dozens of children," she said.

Neither Schneider nor his attorney, Alan Stoler, was immediately available for comment. Cooper also did not return a phone call.

City Prosecutor Marty Conboy said he believed the maximum fine of \$1,000 and probation would have been the appropriate sentence in this case.

"It certainly is on the more serious

end of the scale of these sort of cases," he said. "With this large of a party and with these kids getting arrested, the homeowner who is there while it's going on does have considerable culpability."

Prosecutors allege that Schneider allowed hundreds of teens to drink at his home, 116 S. 92nd St., during the Aug. 27 party.

The students indicated Mr. Schneider was present during the party, which lasted all night," Conboy said. Schneider was seen cleaning up cans

See **DRINKING PARTY** Page 16

DRINKING PARTY

\$500 Fine Too Lenient, Critics Say

Continued from Page 15

during the party, Conboy said. "He was aware of what was going on," Conboy said. "There was no indication he provided alcohol, but he was aware it was there."

Schneider told police he had been sleeping at the time and woke to find his house "wall to wall" with kids, according to the police report.

Police have said the four Westside

boys who attended the party took from the house a gallon of muriatic acid and a flammable liquid to clean pools.

They then reportedly walked six blocks to the home of Marty Kauffman, a dean who handles discipline for freshmen and sophomore boys at Westside.

Acid was poured on the side of Kauffman's car, on an air-conditioning unit and in the front yard. The garage siding was set on fire.

Riibe said the judge gave Schneider a slap on the wrist and ignored clear-cut evidence that he had allowed underage drinking in his home.

"I would encourage policy-makers as well as parents to call Judge Cooper up and ask him why," she said.

EDITORIAL PAGE

OMAHA DAILY HERALD FOUNDED 1865
OMAHA DAILY WORLD FOUNDED BY GILBERT M. HITCHCOCK 1885
OMAHA WORLD-HERALD FIRST PUBLISHED JULY 15, 1889

Omaha World-Herald

JOHN GOTTSCHALK, *Publisher*

LAWRENCE D. KING, *Executive Editor* FRANCIS L. PARTSCH, *Editorial Pages Editor*
DEANNA J. SANDS, *Managing Editor*

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Teen Drinking Fought on Many Fronts

Authorities carried out compliance checks at 155 Omaha-area retailers on a recent weekend. They found that 22 percent sold alcoholic beverages to minors. Twenty-five of the businesses failed to even check the buyer's ID.

The sting operation, the latest in the Project Extra Mile compliance checks begun in 1997, shows one aspect of the challenges our community still faces in reducing underage drinking.

Encouraging signs can be found, however. Nebraska has commendably moved during the 1990s to strengthen its campaign against alcohol sales to underage drinkers. The Nebraska Liquor Control Commission has allowed compliance checks of retailers since 1992. The commission has doubled the fines for underage sales. The Legislature voted to give the commission the option to close down businesses caught selling alcohol to minors more than once in a four-year period. In May, the commission revoked the liquor license of an Omaha convenience store that had sold alcohol to minors five times over the previous decade.

Due process considerations shouldn't be jettisoned in pursuit of this worthy cause, however. The commission made that point last spring when it threw out 15 sales-to-minors violations, saying the minors used in sting opera-

tions had appeared too old to retailers.

Nor should the entire effort be aimed at retailers. Underage drinkers have a lot of other ways of getting their hands on alcohol, ranging from buying through adult friends to pilfering a parental supply. And ultimately, those underage drinkers themselves are responsible for their behavior. Serious enforcement and education efforts should be aimed at them, not just a retailer with a clerk who is inattentive or can't look at someone's birthdate and calculate her age.

The underage drinking issue has received considerable attention. Calls have arisen for police to respond more quickly to reports of teen drinking parties. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has received a \$700,000 federal grant to reduce student binge drinking over five years. And former UNL Chancellor Graham Spanier, now president of Penn State University, has helped organize a national campaign to combat excessive drinking on college campuses.

Worthy individuals and institutions are throwing their weight behind this important cause. The battle should be waged with determination.

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD

Tuesday, October 26, 1999

71% of Stores Checked Reject Minors Trying to Buy Alcohol

BY TANYA EISERER
and ERIN GRACE

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITERS

Omaha Police Sgt. Ron Cole stood two customers behind Jennie as she waited to purchase a 40-ounce bottle of Bud Light at the Baker's Supermarket at 24th and Vinton Streets.

Jennie was asked if she had a Baker's value card, but the 20-year-old University of Nebraska-Lincoln student was never questioned about her age.

The store's front-end coordinator, who was called to the underage clerk's register, rang up the \$2.55 bottle without checking the customer's Nebraska driver's license.

"This is exactly what we're talking about," said Cole, a supervisor in the vice unit, as he left the store. "It's so easy to buy alcohol."

Fifteen teams of law enforcement officers and underage individuals like Jennie checked 155 businesses in the Omaha area last weekend to see if they were complying with liquor laws.

Most businesses — 71 percent — were in compliance, but at 25 of the 35 businesses that sold to minors, clerks did not check IDs.

The compliance checks were coordinated by Project Extra Mile, a 4-year-old organization trying to reduce underage drinking.

More than 50 officers from nine different law enforcement agencies participated in the effort from 6 p.m. Saturday until 4 a.m. Sunday. The effort, in addition to the compliance checks, included vehicle safety checks, traffic stops and park sweeps.

Omaha police organized a traffic stop at L Street and Dahlman Avenue. Of 127 stops, officers ticketed 112 people for a variety of offenses. Of those, nine were cited for driving while intoxicated and one for a minor in possession.

Saturday night's sweep was the seventh such effort coordinated by Project Extra Mile. At the last one on

April 17, 27 of 128 businesses checked, or 21 percent, were not in compliance.

Eighteen of those businesses were checked again Saturday; four still sold to minors.

Though the portion of businesses selling to minors has gone down since Project Extra Mile started organizing the compliance checks in 1997, the percentage of businesses that did not check IDs before selling to minors remains "alarming," said Diane Riibe, executive director of Project Extra Mile.

Businesses that do not check the ID of a young person are more likely to sell to minors, she said.

"We continue to see what would seem like the obvious," Riibe said at a press conference Monday inside the Bellevue City Council chambers. "Guessing a young person's age simply does not work."

The Baker's coordinator, Gustavo Lopez, said he made a mistake. "I'm sorry," he said when confronted Saturday night. "It's not going to happen again."

Tom Baker, a Baker's spokesman, said he couldn't comment on Lopez's case. He said the supermarket chain has a zero-tolerance policy regarding alcohol sales to minors, and selling alcohol to a minor results in automatic termination for any employee.

Three other Baker's stores passed the compliance check Saturday.

"We put a great deal of effort into the protection of minors," Baker said. "It's very rare that a sale actually happens."

What also is alarming, Riibe said, is that some businesses do ask for ID and then sell to minors anyway. The youths who participated in Saturday's compliance checks used their own driver's licenses, but 10 businesses that asked to see identification sold to them anyway.

"That's either egregious behavior or sloppy math," she said. "That says poor business practice. And that can be remedied."

Riibe commended businesses that passed the test and asked them to bring positive pressure in their own industry.

Mark Conrey, 911 chief for Douglas County, said the communications center receives a number of calls on the weekends about parties, but they typically receive a low priority.

He said that if callers indicate that they suspect underage drinking, officers can respond more quickly. He encouraged the public to report any underage drinking.

"Law enforcement cannot be the only ones to tackle this problem," Conrey said at the press conference. "This is a very severe problem."

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD Wednesday, September 15, 1999

24

EDITORIAL PAGE

OMAHA DAILY HERALD FOUNDED 1865
OMAHA DAILY WORLD FOUNDED BY GILBERT M. HITCHCOCK 1885
OMAHA WORLD-HERALD FIRST PUBLISHED JULY 15, 1889

Omaha World-Herald

JOHN GOTTSCHALK, *Publisher*

LAWRENCE D. KING, *Executive Editor* FRANCIS L. PARTSCH, *Editorial Pages Editor*

DEANNA J. SANDS, *Managing Editor*

Wrong Signal on Teen Drinking

Omaha doesn't need to have its teen-agers knowingly whispering about the city's ho-hum attitude toward under-age drinking. But that is the message in the air.

Whose fault is it that the community has the reputation of laxity on such an important issue? There is plenty of blame to go around.

First, there is a Police Department that doesn't yet put a high-enough priority on breaking up parties where teen-agers are drinking alcohol. While it is true that serious crimes should be attended to first, it is hard to believe that there are so few officers available so frequently that teens routinely assume they will not get busted for drinking at a large, loud, alcohol-soaked party in Omaha.

Surely it can't be that the Omaha Police Department is understaffed and doesn't have enough officers to answer calls. It is budgeted for 722 officers in 1999, up from 702 in 1998 and 655 in 1994.

In addition, the department has made much of its effort to replace sworn officers assigned to routine clerical-type duties with civilians in order to return those officers to the street. There should be no great shortage of patrol officers, even on nights when calls are heavy. If there are, then still more officers — or better allocation of officers on the roster — are necessary.

Omaha City Prosecutor Marty Conboy has noted that the typical penalty in Omaha for being a minor in possession of alcohol is relatively small — \$100 or several hours of community service or both. That isn't much of a deterrent for youngsters who routinely pay nearly as much for athletic shoes.

Nonetheless, the size of the fine isn't that important. More significant, to young people at least, is the act of breaking up the party. If officers consistently shut down these heavy-drinking sessions attended by so many teen-agers, or at least sent (or took) the under-age drinkers home, the city would soon lose its reputation as soft on this particular misdemeanor.

The fault doesn't lie solely with Omaha police officers. Mayor Hal Daub and the City Council must accept their share, too. Neither has seen fit to sufficiently emphasize the importance to the Police Department of creating an environment less conducive to kids' alcohol feasts.

A small measure of responsibility for the problem might go to some of the neighbors who report the parties to the 911 center. The center attaches priorities to the emergency calls that come in. A higher priority is given to reports of underage drinking, marijuana abuse or fighting at parties. Perhaps some callers don't let 911 operators know the full extent of the problem being reported.

And some of the fault attaches to parents of the young drinkers, who either don't know what their kids are doing or don't care. Too many arrogant young fools of the '90s are certain their parents will bail them out of any problem and there will be no meaningful repercussions.

Youthful drinking is a dangerous activity that parents should be far more concerned about than many seem to be. Crime, unwanted pregnancies, drug use, alcoholism and even death can come from alcohol abuse by kids too young to make such life-changing decisions.

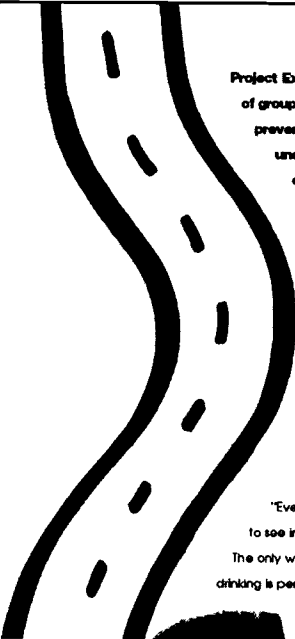
By one measure, Omaha officers are stepping up their activity in this area. In 1998, Conboy reported, 1,186 cases of a minor in possession of alcohol were filed compared with 801 in 1997. He expects the number to continue upward.

Diane Riibe, executive director of Project Extra Mile, a federally funded anti-underage drinking advocacy group, said that Omaha police have proven they are serious about the problem.

But the effort is not yet good enough. As long as under-age people can gather for a drinking party without worrying about a police raid, as long as the city has a reputation for looking the other way when kids drink, the effort will never be good enough.

A Community Case Study On...

APPENDIX 6



Project Extra Mile is building a coalition of groups and individuals who want to prevent the tragic consequences of underage drinking. Here are comments from a few of our members.

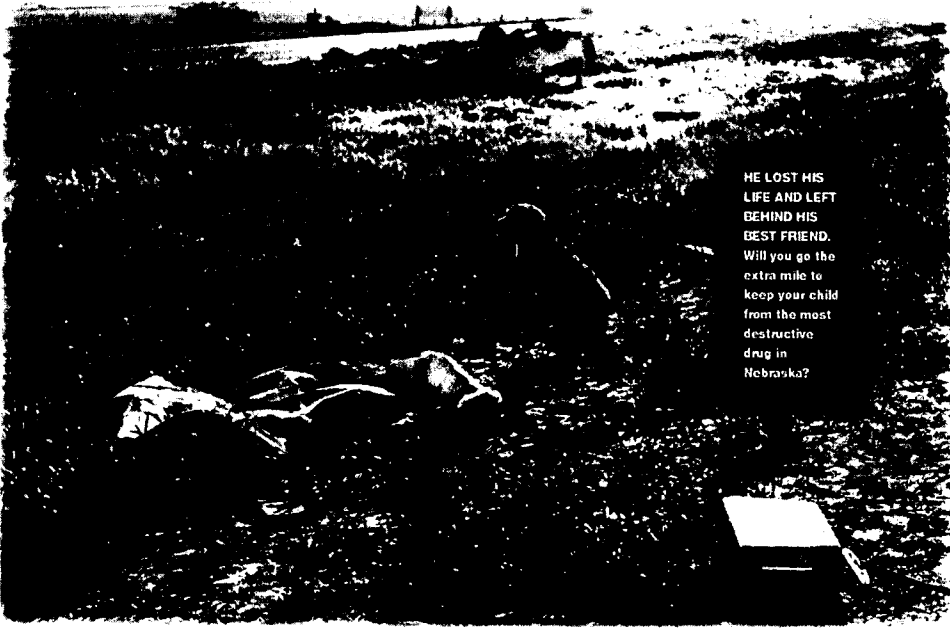
"I have a young nephew who will turn 60 in prison for crimes he committed as an intoxicated 19-year-old. I've since learned that over 80% of juveniles who are incarcerated today were using alcohol or other drugs when they committed their crimes. We have to stop the waste of young lives."

- Bill Hutto, employee assistance consultant

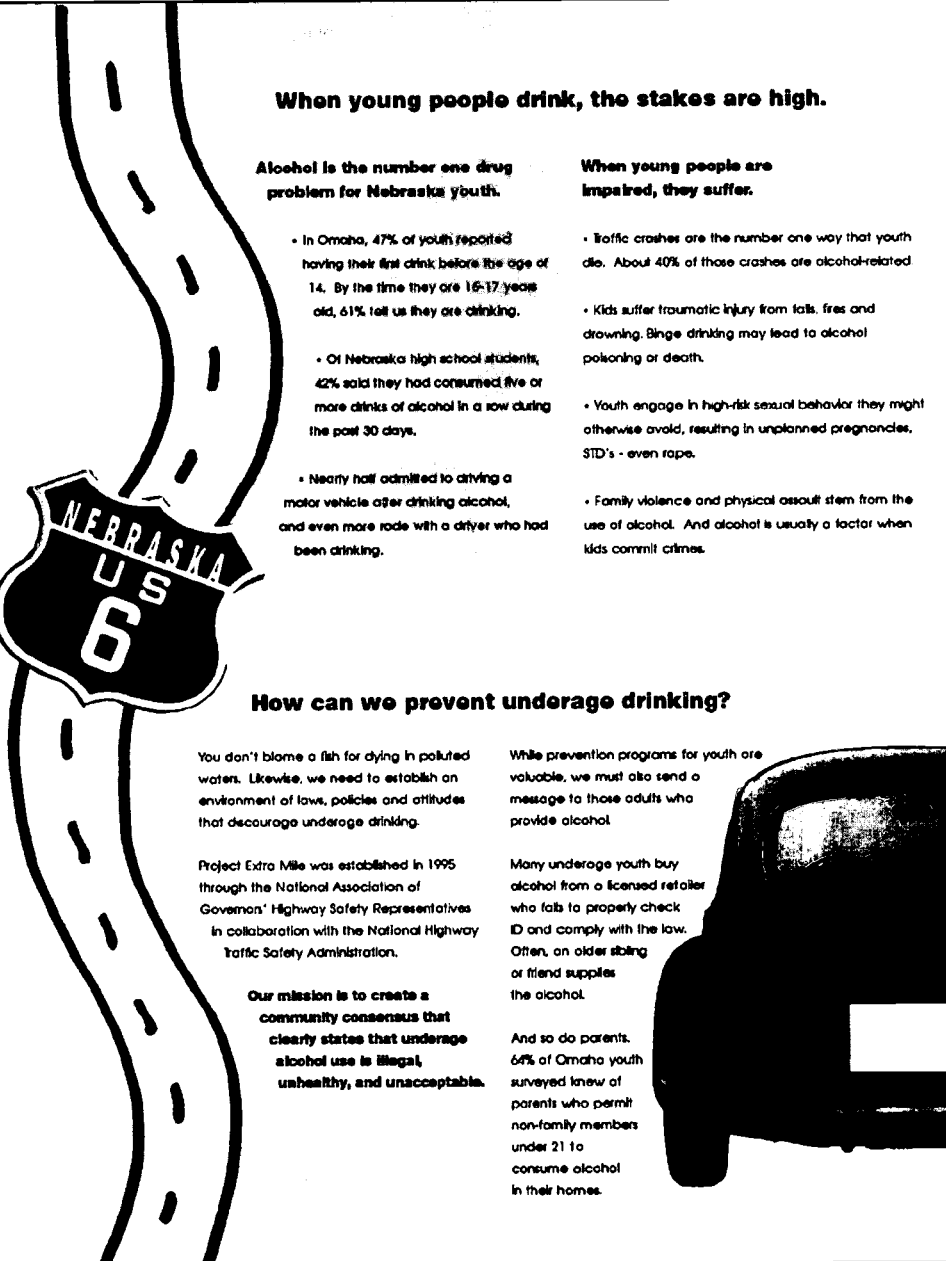
"Every year I worry about what we're going to see in the paper about a weekend incident. The only way to change the mindset that underage drinking is permissible is to work together - as parents, businesses, and schools. The coalition helps build those alliances."

- Dr. Leon Dapper, Assistant School Superintendent

Cover: The 17-year-old drinking driver lost control of his vehicle on I-80. His dog -- and a case of beer -- were thrown from the car. The law enforcement officer, first at the scene, was heartsick as he comforted the dying young man.



HE LOST HIS LIFE AND LEFT BEHIND HIS BEST FRIEND. Will you go the extra mile to keep your child from the most destructive drug in Nebraska?



When young people drink, the stakes are high.

Alcohol is the number one drug problem for Nebraska youth.

- In Omaha, 47% of youth reported having their first drink before the age of 14. By the time they are 16-17 years old, 61% tell us they are drinking.
- Of Nebraska high school students, 42% said they had consumed five or more drinks of alcohol in a row during the past 30 days.
- Nearly half admitted to driving a motor vehicle after drinking alcohol, and even more rode with a driver who had been drinking.

When young people are impaired, they suffer.

- Traffic crashes are the number one way that youth die. About 40% of those crashes are alcohol-related.
- Kids suffer traumatic injury from falls, fires and drowning. Binge drinking may lead to alcohol poisoning or death.
- Youth engage in high-risk sexual behavior they might otherwise avoid, resulting in unplanned pregnancies, STD's - even rape.
- Family violence and physical assault stem from the use of alcohol. And alcohol is usually a factor when kids commit crimes.

How can we prevent underage drinking?

You don't blame a fish for dying in polluted waters. Likewise, we need to establish an environment of laws, policies and attitudes that discourage underage drinking.

Project Extra Mile was established in 1995 through the National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives in collaboration with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

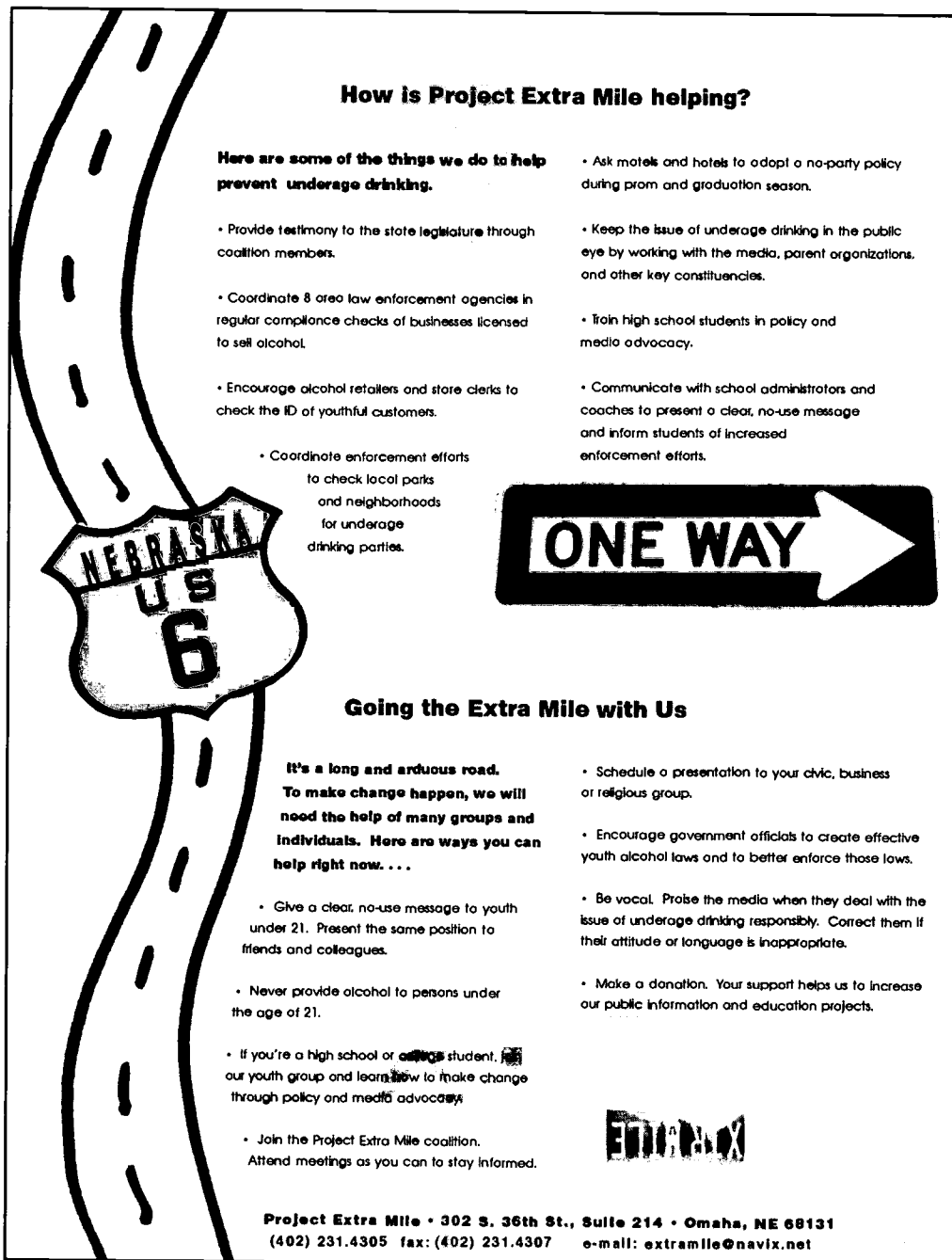
Our mission is to create a community consensus that clearly states that underage alcohol use is illegal, unhealthy, and unacceptable.

While prevention programs for youth are valuable, we must also send a message to those adults who provide alcohol.

Many underage youth buy alcohol from a licensed retailer who fails to properly check ID and comply with the law. Often, an older sibling or friend supplies the alcohol.

And so do parents. 64% of Omaha youth surveyed knew of parents who permit non-family members under 21 to consume alcohol in their homes.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



How is Project Extra Mile helping?

Here are some of the things we do to help prevent underage drinking.

- Provide testimony to the state legislature through coalition members.
- Coordinate 8 area law enforcement agencies in regular compliance checks of businesses licensed to sell alcohol.
- Encourage alcohol retailers and store clerks to check the ID of youthful customers.
- Coordinate enforcement efforts to check local parks and neighborhoods for underage drinking parties.
- Ask motels and hotels to adopt a no-party policy during prom and graduation season.
- Keep the issue of underage drinking in the public eye by working with the media, parent organizations, and other key constituencies.
- Train high school students in policy and media advocacy.
- Communicate with school administrators and coaches to present a clear, no-use message and inform students of increased enforcement efforts.

Going the Extra Mile with Us

It's a long and arduous road. To make change happen, we will need the help of many groups and individuals. Here are ways you can help right now. . . .

- Give a clear, no-use message to youth under 21. Present the same position to friends and colleagues.
- Never provide alcohol to persons under the age of 21.
- If you're a high school or college student, join our youth group and learn how to make change through policy and media advocacy.
- Join the Project Extra Mile coalition. Attend meetings as you can to stay informed.
- Schedule a presentation to your civic, business or religious group.
- Encourage government officials to create effective youth alcohol laws and to better enforce those laws.
- Be vocal. Probe the media when they deal with the issue of underage drinking responsibly. Correct them if their attitude or language is inappropriate.
- Make a donation. Your support helps us to increase our public information and education projects.

Project Extra Mile • 302 S. 36th St., Suite 214 • Omaha, NE 68131
(402) 231.4305 fax: (402) 231.4307 e-mail: extramile@navix.net

PILOT PROJECTS

Cities, counties and neighborhoods across America are confronting the problem of underage drinking and its consequences. As the professional organization representing the chief highway safety officers from each state, the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories, the National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives (NAGHSR) is committed to helping reduce illegal underage alcohol consumption and curb the terrible toll underage drinking takes on our society.

Underage Drinking Pilot Project

In March 1995, NAGHSR launched a pilot project on underage drinking funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The pilot assisted five communities in developing and implementing comprehensive underage drinking prevention programs based on a model initiated in the Washington, D.C. area in 1992 at the direction of the U.S. Congress.

The five NAGHSR pilot sites included Chesterfield County, VA; Travis County (Austin), TX; Omaha, NE; Detroit, MI and Salt Lake City, UT. In the first year, the project focused on developing broad-based community coalitions and helping those coalitions undertake an extensive needs assessment regarding the nature, extent and consequences of underage drinking in their communities.

Based on the information obtained during the needs assessment process, each site developed a comprehensive strategic plan that was implemented in subsequent years. The strategic plans included goals and objectives that were directly related to specific problems identified in the needs assessment. The objectives were specific and measurable so that progress could be tracked over time.

Each of the communities demonstrated success and four of the five programs continue to operate. The Travis County Underage Drinking Prevention Project in Austin, TX was nominated for a national award by the state's highway safety office and the Safe and Sober Youth Project in Chesterfield County, VA continues to expand its operations and activities to other counties. Project Extra Mile in Omaha, NE and Save Our Youth in Salt Lake City, UT are actively involved in underage drinking efforts funded through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Project Extra Mile has received extensive media coverage and was the recipient of a 1999 Award from the National Commission Against Drunk Driving. The programs have succeeded in building awareness of the problem in their communities, mobilizing key members of the community to take action and changing policies, procedures and laws that directly relate to underage drinking.

Rapid Response Team

To build on the success of the demonstration projects, NAGHSR and NHTSA decided in March 1998 to pilot test another approach to providing technical assistance to communities working to prevent underage drinking. The revised concept involved intense, short-term assistance to communities provided by a team of nationally recognized experts. State highway safety offices were invited to nominate communities to receive the technical assistance and NAGHSR and NHTSA chose six sites in various states. The "on-site" intensive technical assistance was christened the "Rapid Response Team." The team provided technical assistance for coalitions, which already existed, but were having difficulty designing and implementing underage drinking prevention programs. Assistance by the Rapid Response Team gave each site a "jump start" in developing or strengthening comprehensive, needs-based underage drinking prevention programs.



A Community Case Study On...

APPENDIX 7

The six communities selected to participate in the pilot, which was conducted from March 1998 to September 30, 1999, included Rio Arriba County, NM; Tippecanoe County, IN; Oswego County, NY; Hermantown, MN; Lenoir County, NC, and Prince George's County, MD. Each of the six communities received the following:

- Assistance in completing a self-assessment to determine the nature and extent of the underage drinking problem in their community.
- A three-day site visit by the team of nationally recognized experts, who worked with local advocates and officials to guide them in developing a comprehensive program. Members of the team included experts in:
 - Coalition building, needs assessments and strategic planning
 - Enforcement and adjudication
 - Community development
 - Youth programs and school-based prevention
 - Public policy
 - Media Relations
- Additional technical assistance was provided for three months from the team by phone, fax and e-mail.

NAGHSR also led the first phase of technical assistance for the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) nationwide program, Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws. In this effort, the NAGHSR team reviewed the underage drinking prevention plans for all 50 states and the District of Columbia and provided training for forty-eight states and the District of Columbia. The NAGHSR *Community How To Guides on Underage Drinking Prevention* contain information gleaned from the experience of the Washington, D.C., area model (the Washington Regional Alcohol Program and Drawing the Line on Underage Alcohol Use), the eleven sites in the two NAGHSR pilot projects, and the OJJDP technical assistance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives (NAGHSR) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) wishes to thank the leaders in the NAGHSR underage drinking pilot sites and the rapid response pilot sites for their leadership and enthusiasm to address underage drinking within their communities.

The personnel involved in the first pilot effort include the following: Diane Riibe of Project Extra Mile in Omaha, Nebraska; Pat Farris, former Executive Director of Children At Risk Today in Chesterfield County, Virginia; Gloria Souhami of the Travis County Underage Drinking Prevention Project in Austin, Texas; Cherilynn Uden of Save Our Youth in Salt Lake City, Utah and Alma Gale, with the Bureau of Substance Abuse in Detroit, Michigan.

The pilot of the rapid response initiative involved the following individuals: Juan Roybal of the DWI Prevention Council in Rio Arriba County, New Mexico; Sally McIntire and Debbie Lowe of the Coalition for a Drug-Free Tippecanoe County in Lafayette, IN; Jane Murphy, Karen Hoffman and Barbara Canale of Take Charge Coalition in Oswego, New York; Barbara LaRoque of the Lenoir County Initiative to Reduce Underage Drinking, Kinston, North Carolina; Chris Olafson and Dave Thompson of the Learners At Risk Committee in Hermantown, Minnesota, and Dana Gigliotti of the Prince George's Highway Safety Task Force in Prince George's County, Maryland.

The success of the rapid response pilot was due to the involvement of the team of experts who provided valuable assistance and expertise. Individuals who participated as part of the Rapid Response Team included Marie Bishop, former Governor's Highway Safety Representative in Idaho; Jim Copple, National Crime Prevention Council; Johnnetta Davis, Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation; Captain Tom Didone, Montgomery County, Maryland Police Department; Nancy Chase Garcia, Garcia Consulting (formerly with Center for Substance Abuse Prevention); Andrew Hill, Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention; Officer William Morrison, Montgomery County, Maryland Police Department; Pat Nechodom, University of Utah; Nancy Rea, Drawing the Line on Underage Alcohol Use, Montgomery County, Maryland; Judy Robinson, Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention; Mary Ann Solberg, Troy Community Coalition; Ed Virant, Omaha Public Schools, and Lt. Dick Yost, Phoenix, Arizona Police Department.

Thanks also goes to the many individuals, coalitions and organizations whose ongoing dedication to reducing underage drinking provided an opportunity to test the validity of NAGHSR's comprehensive approach. Their ideas, enthusiasm and commitment demonstrate there is a willingness across this nation to tackle the problem of underage drinking.



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**





U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

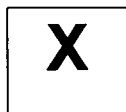


NOTICE

Reproduction Basis



This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.



This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").